NORTH AFRICA

FOR ALL MEMBERS
OF UNITED STATES
EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
IN NORTH AFRICA

I. NORTH AND NORTHWEST AFRICA

Your present journey will be taking you to new parts of the world where the people, their customs and manner of living, and the geography of the country will be, for the majority of us, completely strange and foreign. Furthermore, our welcome by the inhabitants of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunis is not known at this time.

You will, of course, want to know and respect the people in whose country we are stationed. They will judge us by our conduct as individuals. You are, in a very real sense, an ambassador of our nation.

On many occasions this question will be asked you by the inhabitants:

"Why have you come?"

The answer is straight-forward and simple. We have come to drive out the common enemy. We seek no territory or material gains. The people of this area are our traditional friends. We want to keep them as friends. We have come to help them, not to oppress them.

This pamphlet is prepared in order to give you a general background of the area in which you may be stationed.

II. OUR BRITISH ALLIES

1. British troops, ships and planes are backing us up. We are working and fighting together in a United Nations offensive.

2. It was the wish of the President that the first blow in this assault should be primarily American. The name of the United States will stand for freedom to millions of Frenchmen, as it does to all the people of Europe. It was the President's request that we should lead off in this operation in order to make the issue as clear as possible. We Americans have come from afar to hit the common enemy, and we are determined to do our fullest share to liberate the victims of oppression.

3. You are soldiers trained for modern war, and you know a lot about Nazi propaganda. Nothing would be more to Hitler's advantage than to split Americans and British. We know that our interests and those of the British are the same. At bottom we want the same things and we are fighting together to get them. We must not let ourselves be confused about this by any of the enemy's propaganda tricks.

III. OUR FRENCH ALLIES

You will be landing on the shores of a country whose people are our traditional friends. We are not after the conquest of territory, but are out to destroy our enemy. This operation has been decided on as the quickest way to strike at one of the enemy's vulnerable points, and millions of Frenchmen are going to see the point, no matter what their Nazified government tries to tell them. Maybe you don't know what has been happening to the French people, what they have been thinking and doing these last two and a half years. You ought to know some of the story so here it is briefly.

In France itself, especially in the Occupied Zone, the people have been putting up a better fight against the Nazis than their leaders succeeded in putting up. Their spirits were pretty low in the early days after the disaster, and there wasn't much they could do. But, when we came into the war and when they learned how United Nations strength was rising, the hopes of the French shot upward, first slowly, then by leaps and bounds. The French waited for us, and worked for us. They also listened to us, to our radio programs, risking their lives to hear a few words from New York, Cincinnati, Schenectady, Boston or London. They read leaflets dropped by airplanes, and they sent out word that they had never stopped thinking of themselves as our Allies.

And, ever since 1940, many Frenchmen have continued to fight openly on our side, in the armed ranks of the United Nations. They and their brothers at home keeping up the silent and dangerous struggle against terrorism, have wanted the same thing: to regain freedom and to pay back the Nazis for France's defeat and humiliation.

Don't forget these facts. Don't forget that an overwhelming majority of Frenchmen have always been on our side, and are still on our side.

IV. GEOGRAPHIC

The terrain of Algeria and French Morocco is generally of the same description. It consists of a relatively narrow coastal strip, in rear of which rise three mountain chains, which in general parallel the coastal outline. Between these ranges in certain localities you will find agricultural or grazing lands. Large sections of these three mountain ranges are barren,

rocky, and practically inaccessible. In rear of the innermost of these ranges lies the Sahara Desert.

The climate found in these countries varies greatly depending on your location. Along the coast the summers are oppressive due to humidity. In winter the coastal areas have a climate very similar to that of early fall in the United States. Little rainfall is experienced along the coast.

In the mountain areas, the climate is mild in summer; the days may be hot, but the nights cool. Winter in the mountains is in general cold with light North winds and occasional snow. Rain is infrequent in these areas.

During the entire year a strong North wind called the SIROCCO may sweep the country. This wind is dry and hot, usually carries fine sand and dust and is very trying to humans. In addition, dust storms are fairly frequent during the summer and may occur during the winter.

Mirage is of fairly frequent occurrence. It generally occurs early in the morning. These mirages are apt to be very confusing to troops not used to them, for as a result of images, ranges are hard to estimate and objects take on a deceptive appearance.

V. NORTH AFRICA

The French territories in North Africa consist of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.

(*a*). **MOROCCO**, the westernmost region of North Africa, is, next to Egypt, perhaps the most fertile country on the African continent. It produces large quantities of cereals, wine, fruits, mutton and wool. Also, its minerals include immense quantities of lime, zinc and lead.

It is not a colony, but a protected state. It is ruled by a Sultan, at Fez; and the authority of his government, though limited by the protectorate, is still considerable. The French Resident-General and his staff have always been extremely careful to show deference and consideration for the authority of the Sultan and his Pashas and Caids, and have taken great pains to respect the traditions and customs of the native populations.

It would therefore be most harmful if, as a representative of the United States, you behaved in a manner that might be interpreted as unfriendly or arrogant. In spite of all their difficulties with the German-controlled French government both the American and British governments have never wavered in their friendship for the people of Morocco, who look on the United States as a powerful, friendly country, inhabited by courteous, brave, and generous people.

(b). **ALGERIA**, in the center of the French North African territories, has been under French rule since 1830, and is politically and administratively part of France herself. In all the important cities the Europeans outnumber the natives.

There is no doubt that French rule has greatly benefited the population. Algeria, like Morocco, is a very fertile country, mainly agricultural, and produces immense quantities of wine, cereals, meat and fruit.

During the last war, the Algerians lost 25,000 killed in battle; and in 1939 they answered with great fervor the call to arms. What is more important, since July, 1940, Algerian workmen in French factories have helped in underground resistance, and have been shot by the Germans for doing so.

(c). **TUNISIA**, which is the easternmost territory of French North Africa, is situated halfway between Gibraltar and the

Suez Canal, and forms a promontory stretching towards the Italian island of Sicily. It is a French protectorate.

The prosperity of Tunisia under French protection, and the tremendous extent of the cultivation of cereals and olives, have attracted many immigrants from Italy, who have made their homes there and have established prosperous agricultural settlements. One result of this has been the constant cry, set up by the Fascist regime in Italy, of "Tunisia for the Italians." Every Frenchman knows that the wish to grab Tunisia was one of the chief reasons that caused Mussolini to stab France in the back in 1940.

At the beginning of this war, a large French army was on the frontier between Tunisia and the Italian colony of Tripolitania. Together with the British army in Egypt, this force was to have neutralized Italian military power in North Africa. After the fall of France, the Vichy government disbanded this army before it had fired a shot, and ordered its fortifications to be demolished. It may well be that the men of this army will seize the chance, when it comes, to avenge that bitter humiliation.

VI. HYGIENE

All of North and Northwestern Africa is a breeding ground for disease. The majority of these diseases are ones with which we are not, as individuals, familiar, since they do not occur at home. The standards of civilian hygiene in this area are low and the risks of infection correspondingly high. The following are some simple rules which must be followed if you are to remain healthy. Learn these rules and follow them :

(*a*) DURING THE HOT WEATHER THE CHIEF DANGERS ARE :

1. Sunstroke and heatstroke.

2. Intestinal diseases, such as cholera, typhoid fever, dysentery, bilharzia, etc.

3. Insect-borne diseases, such as malaria, dengue.

(*b*) SUN AND HEAT :

1. Always wear your sun helmet from sunrise to sunset unless you are in a house with a good roof.

2. See that your clothing and equipment fits properly, and permits as much evaporation of sweat from the skin as possible.

3. Avoid constipation.

(*c*) INTESTINAL DISEASES :

Cholera, typhoid fever and dysentery, are caused by germs in the bowel discharges or urine of persons already suffering from, or who are carriers of these diseases. These germs get into water or milk, or on the food, and so the disease is spread. Dust and flies play an important part and carry infected matter from improperly constructed latrines and manure dumps to milk, jam, bread, sugar, cheese, or other food.

(*d*) TO GUARD AGAINST THESE DISEASES :

1. Be inoculated and re-inoculated against typhoid fever and other diseases, as recommended by the Medical Officer.

2. Do not drink water or milk unless it has been boiled or chemically purified. Tea or coffee is a safe drink because the water is always boiled.

3. Do not take lemonade or other "soft drinks", or ice, bought from natives of the country.

4. Before eating uncooked dates, tomatoes, grapes, or other fruits, wash them thoroughly in purified water. Never eat cut fruit or raw lettuce.

5. Dispose of excreta and refuse (garbage) so that flies cannot gain access to them, and so that there is no danger of food or water contamination.

6. Keep flies away from your food by killing them and by protecting the food.

7. Wash your hands, if possible, after visiting the latrine, and before taking food. Those handling food for others should be especially careful to keep clean hands.

8. Report sick at once if you have diarrhoea; it may be dangerous for your comrades if you go about without being treated.

Bilharzia disease is caused by drinking or washing in water containing worms which are able to penetrate the skin and reach the intestine. Do not, therefore, wash, bathe, or wade in stagnant or slowly moving fresh water unless it is certain that no snails are present.

VII. INSECT-BORNE DISEASES

Malaria and dengue are spread by the bites of mosquitoes which convey infection from the blood of one man to that of another. Take the following precautions during the malarial season :

1. Use your mosquito bar (net).

2. Wear trousers, and not " shorts " in the evenings. This will prevent your thighs and knees being bitten by mosquitoes. Veils and gauntlets should be used by guards, sentries, etc. at night. If these precautions cannot be taken, smear exposed parts of the body with anti-mosquito cream, which gives protection for 2 or 3 hours.

3. Spray quarters in the evening with an anti-mosquito spray.

4. Take your anti-malaria tablets regularly during the malarial season in accordance with orders.

VIII. DURING THE COLD WEATHER

During the cold weather some of the above diseases will disappear, but the following may take their place:

(a). " Droplet " infection, such as pneumonia, influenza, common cold, etc.

(b). Insect-borne diseases, such as plague, relapsing fever, typhus, and other diseases spread by lice, fleas, ticks, etc.

IX. PNEUMONIA, INFLUENZA

Pneumonia and influenza, etc., are rapidly spread in the presence of overcrowded and inadequate ventilation.

(a). Wear woollen O.D. instead of Khaki.

(b). Keep the stomach well protected and covered at night when lying down.

(c). Avoid native huts and sleeping accommodations, owing to the danger of infected rats, fleas, ticks, etc.

(d). Learn to recognize the more common types of vermin and how to deal with them on your body and clothing.

(e). You will be supplied with insect-killing powder. Use it by sprinkling and rubbing into the seams of underclothing.

X. VENEREAL DISEASE

(a). Venereal diseases, especially syphilis, are rife among all prostitutes.

(b). Grave risks accompany sexual intercourse, and native women are to be avoided.

(c). Immediately after exposure, a man must report to a prophylactic station for venereal prophylactic.

XI. MONEY

You will be paid in overprinted (special) U.S. currency. This money will be redeemable at face value for regular U.S. currency if you leave the country. However, for any purchases you may wish to make locally it will be necessary for you to change your pay to the currency of the country. The rate of exchange will be fixed and controlled.

In the French colonies of North Africa, the monetary system is based on the "Franc"—one franc is equivalent to 100 "Centimes." However, you will find little to purchase in these countries, for as a result of war, stocks of supplies have been reduced to the vanishing point. You will need

very little money, and the best plan is to make an allotment covering at least 75% of your pay either to your dependants or to a bank at home. Did you know that if you are captured or reported missing your allotment will continue to be paid?

XII. THE NATIVE POPULATION

In North Africa you will meet the descendants of races and empires which were making history at the dawn of organized life, thousands of years ago. Some of the people are Arabs, some Negroes, some of other origins.

Most of them will seem to be, and are, very different from people at home. But don't make any mistakes about them, and don't judge by external appearances which may confuse you.

They are not backward, uneducated people. They were great, and created rich cultures long before Columbus discovered America.

Many of the tribes of Morocco and Algeria can look back with pride to the great Arab Empire which attained immense power when Europe was still struggling through the dark ages.

Their dress, their customs, their habits may seem strange and peculiar to you, but keep in mind that they are in no sense inferior to you or the Europeans, that they have made great contributions to civilization.

The French have always understood how to deal with the inhabitants of North Africa. They have never treated them as inferiors. They have never followed the Nazi racial doctrine which says that all races are inferior to the one self-appointed German Master Race.

It is up to you, as representatives of America, to observe and respect the relations which have grown up between the French and the people of North Africa under their rule. It's up to you to remember that these North Africans are in their own home, and that you are in their home. Act towards them as you would expect them to act towards you if they came to America on the same kind of mission as yours.

It may not be easy. You may bring some old prejudices with you, prejudices of race or color or creed. If so, you must remember that it's your first duty to subordinate them to the good of your country. You must take the attitude that giving away to such prejudices would amount literally to shooting Americans in the back.

That's not an over-statement. Your behavior toward the population is as important as your bravery under fire. If you do the wrong thing, you are helping the enemy. If you act in an unfriendly or undignified manner, you will be fighting against our side. A brawl in a café, or a street incident, would give the Nazis just the kind of ammunition they want. It would damage our cause and help create confusion in the Near and Middle East. It would, in effect, amount to exposing the lives of your friends and comrades to entirely unnecessary risks.

XIII. THE MOSLEM RELIGION

The immense majority of the inhabitants of these territories are Moslems, followers of the prophet Mohammed. Their racial origins may differ ; their dialects, customs and standards of living may vary greatly from region to region: but they have in common the great religious and cultural traditions of Islam.

Their mosques and other places of worship are sacred to them. A few mosques may permit your inspection, but it is

much better to be on the safe side and stay out of all their holy places. Before you go sightseeing, make sure that you know what the regulations are.

However strange their ideas may seem to you, it is not up to you, when you are in their country, to do or say anything to interfere with customs Arabs have observed and respected for over 1000 years.

XIV. ATTITUDE TOWARD WOMEN

There is no Arab custom which must be respected more completely than their attitude toward women. The difference between peaceful and friendly relations with the natives on the one hand, and serious difficulty on the other, may depend on whether or not *every single one of us* understands and respects the very special outlook the Moslems have toward women.

You must *not* talk to Moslem women. Never. Under no circumstances. The most innocent word addressed to a Moslem woman is considered an insult, and is bitterly resented by all Moslem men. If an Arab asks you into his house, the women in the house are confined to their quarters. If anything is said or done by you which would make Moslem men feel you have shown disrespect for their women, there will be no limit to their righteous indignation.

Regarding Moslem women, you must put aside all your own preconceived notions and ideas. *You must remember that your conduct in this matter may decide the fate of this campaign.*

Remember this at all times. It is a most serious warning.

SOME IMPORTANT DO'S AND DON'TS

Don't enter mosques.

Never smoke or spit in front of a mosque.

If you come near a mosque, keep moving and don't loiter.

Keep silent when Moslems are praying and don't stare.

Discuss something else—*never* religion or women with Moslems.

Avoid offering opinions on internal policies.

Shake hands with Arabs; otherwise don't touch them or slap them on the back.

Remember that the Arabs are a modest people and avoid any exposure of the body in their presence.

Start eating only after your host has begun.

Eat with your right hand—never with your left, even if you are a southpaw.

Always break bread with your fingers—never cut it.

Bread to the Moslems is holy. Don't throw scraps of it about or let it fall on the ground.

Leave some food in the bowl—what you leave goes to the women and children.

Eat only part of the first course—there may be four or five more coming.

Don't give Moslems food containing pork, bacon or lard, or cooked in pork products.

Don't eat pork or pork products in front of Moslems.

Be pleasant if Moslems refuse to eat meat which you offer. They may consider it religiously unclean.

Don't give Moslems alcoholic drinks.

Drink liquor somewhere else—never in the presence of Moslems.

Knock before entering a house. If a woman answers, wait until she has had time to retire.

Follow the rule of your host. If he takes off his shoes on entering the house, do the same.

If you are required to sit on the floor in an Arab house or tent, cross your legs while doing so.

When visiting, don't overstay your welcome. The third glass of tea or coffee is the signal to leave unless you are quartered there.

Don't bring a dog into the house.

Don't kill snakes and birds. Some Arabs believe the souls of departed chieftains reside in them.

Be kind to beggars. They are mostly honest unfortunates. Give them some small change occasionally.

When you see grown men walking hand in hand, ignore it. They are not "queer."

Avoid any expression of race prejudice.

Talk Arabic if you can to the people. No matter how badly you do it, they like it.

Shake hands on meeting and leaving.

On meeting an Arab, be sure to inquire after his health.

If you wish to give someone a present, make it sweets or cigarettes.

If you are stationed in the country, it is a good idea to take sweets and cigarettes with you when you visit an Arab house.

Show respect toward all older persons. If serving food, the oldest person should be served first.

Be polite. Good manners are essential among the Arabs. Be hospitable to Arabs whenever possible. Do not turn away callers. Serve them coffee or tea.

Bargain on prices. Don't let shopkeepers or merchants overcharge you; but be polite.

Be generous with your cigarettes.

Above all, use common sense on all occasions. And remember that every American soldier is an unofficial ambassador of good will.

XV. CARELESS TALK

Finally a word to the wise. The whole of North Africa has been flooded, in the last two years, with Axis agents who will be eager to obtain all information possible about our plans, our strength, our troops dispositions; in fact, any type of information. A clever agent may get the complete plan by piecing together small scraps of conversations. Remember silence will save your life and the lives of your fellow soldiers so DON'T talk or let your buddies talk about military affairs.